

It's mental health awareness week. Here are some things you need to know

At [Bristol University](#), at least nine students are believed to have taken their own lives in the twenty months since September 2016.

Suicide is now the leading cause of student death in the UK. And it doesn't come from nowhere.

Responding to [The Tab's mental health survey](#) last year, over half of Durham students said they had suffered from poor mental health.

It is crucial that you know where you can turn when you couldn't be feeling any worse.

Asking for help is not a sign of weakness – it is a sign of strength, and one of the bravest things that you can do.

Please read this guide to find out who is here to help.

College

Holly, who studies Anthropology, is the Female Welfare Officer at Cuth's.

"If you are struggling with mental health", she says, "asking for help is not a sign of weakness – it is a sign of strength, and one of the bravest things that you can do.

"Nobody will think any less of you. It is definitely not a sign of personal failure. Seeking help and talking about how you are feeling is the first step on the road to recovery, and you will be surprised as to how many people will want to help and support you."

Student welfare teams aim to be as accessible as possible, and they all hold frequent open hours. In each Durham college, there is also one member of trained staff paid to listen to students, and one assistant. Their contact details can be found on your college's website.

Nightline

Nightline is a student-run listening service open every night of term between 9pm and 7am. You can find their number on the back of your Campus Card, on your DUO homepage, or you can contact them through Instant Messenger on their [website](#).

When we spoke to Nightline's director about what it's like to listen to fellow students, this is what she said:

"I feel really really privileged to have been able to be there with them at a time when they didn't feel like there was anyone else they could talk to. I think that's something really special.

"You can contact us about anything at all, whether that be because you are feeling suicidal or simply because you fancy a chat.

"So I would say that people should call or message us if they feel as though they don't have anyone else to talk to in that moment. We're there every night of term, 9 pm to 7 am, so no matter what time, it's not an inconvenience at all!"

University

The university counselling service is ready to help in a number of ways, including counselling, mental health advice, and psychological wellbeing.

You can call them on 0191 334 2200, and more information about how they can help is available on their [website](#).

Disability support, based in the Palatine Centre, helps students not only with physical disabilities, but with mental health struggles, too. They offer four free sessions, and have strong links to medical support if you need it.

Outside of university

The [Samaritans](#) offer a free and confidential 24/7 helpline to support people experiencing difficulties or who need crisis support. They can be contacted on 116 123 for free.

Doctors can advise you on cognitive behavioural therapy as well as prescribe medication if it is needed. You can call Claypath and University Medical Centre on 0191 386 5081. In cases of medical emergency, call 999.

At university, it's easy to feel like you're meant to be having the best time all of the time. But that's not how it works. However it is you are feeling, you should never be ashamed.

